

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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-----101344Z 123039 /43

R 071749Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8519

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: POLITICAL VIEWS OF NEW PSOE PRESIDENT

1. AMCONSUL BILBAO CALLED ON RAMON RUBIAL, 70 YEAR OLD NEWLY ELECTED PSOE PRESIDENT, THE SMALL MACHINE SHOP WHERE HE WORKS AS FOREMAN, AND SUBMITTED THE FOLLOWING REPORT OF THEIR CONVERSATION.

2. PSOE CONGRESS. RUBIAL INDICATED THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE CONGRESS COULD BE MEASURED BY THE FACT THAT THE PARTY HAD RECEIVED 3,000 APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP, MOSTLY FROM THE MADRID AREA, DURING THE WEEK OF THE MEETING. HE ADDED HOWEVER, THAT THE GOAL OF THE PSOE SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LARGE PARTY MEMBERSHIP, BUT RATHER TO ATTRACT HIGH QUALITY PEOPLE CAPABLE OF OBTAINING THE SUPPORT OF VOTERS.

3. ELECTORAL TACTICS. THE PSOE'S APPROACH TO THE CONTEST WOULD DEPEND ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE STILL TO BE DRAFTED ELECTORAL LAW. WHILE NOT RULING OUT SOME FORM OF COALITION WITH OTHER LIKE MINDED GROUPS, RUBIAL REJECTED OUT OF HAND ANY COMMON

FRONT WITH THE COMMUNISTS. POINTING OUT THAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF PROFESSING DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES WHEN EXPEDIENT TO DO SO. BUT THAT THIS FLEW IN THE FACE OF THE HISTORY OF THEIR BEHAVIOR IN POWER, THE VENTILATION OF DIFFERING OPINIONS AT THE PSOE CONGRESS, HE ADDED, WAS MARKED CONTRAST TO THE COMMUNISTS LACK OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY.

4. ECONOMIC POLICY, RUBIAL WAS VERY CAUTIOUS HERE, STATING FOR INSTANCE, THAT EVEN NATIONALIZATION OF THE MAJOR BANKS (WHICH IS ADVOCATED BY THE PSOE'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM) SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE UNDERTAKEN BY A SOCIALIST GOVT UNTIL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WERE APPROPRIATE (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON WHAT HE CONSIDERED "APPROPRIATE" CONDITIONS TO BE). HE EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR THE MODERATION OF PORTUGAL'S MARIO SOARES, ESPECIALLY HIS RESTRAINT ON THE ISSUE OF LAND EXPROPRIATION, WHILE ADMITTING THAT OTHERS WITHIN THE PSOE ARE CRITICAL OF SOARES CONSERVATISM.

5. US BASES IN SPAIN. RUBIAL SAID THAT HE SIGNED A PETITION IN 1971 PROTESTING THE US PRESENCE IN SPAIN. HE ADDED, HOWEVER THAT IS THE SPANISH PEOPLE IN A DEMOCRATIC ELECTION, APPROVED THE CONTINUATION OF THE BASES, HW WOULD ACCEPT THEIR DECISION WHEN ASKED IF THIS WERE JUST HIS PERSONAL VIEWPOINT HE REPLIED THAT HE BELIEVED IT TO BE THAT OF A MAJORITY OF THE PSOE MEMBERSHIP.

6. MONARCHY. HE EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE LONG TERM ROLE OF THE MONARCHY. WHEN REMINDED THAT OTHER EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES HAD PROSPERED UNDER CONSTITUTION MONARCHIES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE RESPONDED THAT THE BOURBONS WOULD NEVER BE CONTENT TO BE ONLY FIGUREHEADS. HE SUPPORTED A REFERENDEUM ON THE MONARCHY AS HAD BEEN CONDUCTED IN ITALY AND, MORE RECENTLY IN GREECE

7. PSOE NORTHERN STRENGTH, RUBIAL STATED THAT THE PSOE IS STRONG IN THE NORTHERN COASTAL PROVINCES FROM ASTURIAS TO GUIPUZXA, ALTHOUGH ITS CLOUT IN CONSERVATIOVE SANTADER. WHICH HE EXPECTED ALIANZA POPULAR TO DOMINATE, WAS LARGELY LIMITED TO THE AREA AROUND REINOSA. HE EXPECTED THE PNV BASQUE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO OUT POLL THE PSOE IN GUIPUZCTA, AND POSSIBLY VIZCAYA WHERE THE TWO PARTIES TOGETHER WOULD RECEIVE WELL OVER THE HALF THE VOTE. WHEN REMINDED THAT PNV PRIDED ITSELF ON BEING ABLE TO ACCOMMPDATE ALL CLASSES, RUBIAL REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ALSO TRUE OF THE PSOE.

8. COMMENT: RUBIALS DEMANOR WAS FRIENDLY AND HIS OUTLOOK OPTIMISTIC IN SPITE OF HAVING SPENT 19 YEARS IN FRANCO'S PRISONS SINCE THE CIVIL WAR. HE CLEARLY IS POLITICALLY

MODERATE, EVEN MORE SO PERHAPS THAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PSOE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMEBER ENRIQUE MUGICA. WHO LOOKS TO RUBIAL  
AS SOMETHING OF A MENTOR.STABLER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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